

NSC

14 MAY 75

(DCI's copy)

14 May 1975

DCI BRIEFING FOR
14 MAY NSC MEETING

THE MAYAGUEZ INCIDENT

Status of Khmer Communist Forces

- I. Mr. President, we have some new information on the status of Khmer Communist forces in the Kompong Som - Koh Tang area.
 - A. The most recent reconnaissance concerning naval craft indicates that there are 24 armed ships in the vicinity of Kompong Som -- 13 coastal patrol boats, 10 riverine patrol boats, and one submarine chaser.
 1. In addition, there are 3 utility launching craft (LCUs) at Kompong Som, and one LCM at Ream.
 - B. As for air strength, preliminary analysis of 12 May photography showed three T-28 fighters and a total of six transport aircraft at Kompong Som airfield. There is also a substantial remaining number of some 100 T-28 aircraft left at Pochentong Airfield near Phnom Penh when it fell.

POSITION OF MAYAGUEZ WHEN CAPTURED

All available evidence indicates that the Mayaguez was following the standard shipping route from Hong Kong to Sattahip. This is a very heavily trafficked route. The Mayaguez was intercepted by the Cambodian Communists eight miles south/southwest of Poulo Wai. The ship master gave the location as 0948 N and 10253 E.

C. For air defense, the Communists have apparently deployed antiaircraft artillery near Kompong Som and Ream. Preliminary analysis of 13 May photography shows that there is one 37-mm antiaircraft position just south of Kompong Som, and two 37-mm positions southeast of Ream.

1. These weapons are a threat to aircraft flying within 3 nautical miles of their location, and under 14,000 feet.

D. In ground strength, KC combat forces at Kompong Som total some 2,000 troops. This force could be quickly augmented by the remaining 14,000 troops scattered throughout southwestern Cambodia.

1. [REDACTED] on 14 May 400 additional troops were to be sent to help the "mission."

2. Photoreconnaissance of 13-14 May identified a probable 105-mm howitzer position and a possible coastal artillery position of unidentified caliber just south of Ream.

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3. We have now observed one more large landing craft (LCU) at Kompong Som than reported in last night's briefing. This ship could transport 800 troops. This gives the KC the ability to move 2,400 troops simultaneously.
4. These landing craft, if unopposed, could reach Koh Tang Island in a little over 4 hours.

Communist Tactical Moves

II. The Cambodians have apparently transported at least some of the American crew from Koh Tang Island to the mainland, putting them ashore at Kompong Som port at about 11:00 last night, Washington time.

A. Our aircraft observed up to 40 people aboard a boat heading toward the mainland, with some believed to be Caucasian.

1.



Cambodian outstation -- probably a boat -- was informed that it would be met by another boat, and was instructed to keep the Americans "toward the enemy."

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- B. Bringing at least some of the crew ashore suggests that the Cambodians appreciate the value of the American crew as hostages, offering hope that they will be kept alive by their captors to preserve their usefulness as bargaining chips.
- C. The Americans taken ashore may have been transported further inland by the Cambodians, and at present there is no way of telling where they may be.

- D. [REDACTED] 25X1
- [REDACTED] the Cambodians anticipate a possible attack against their naval base at Ream, south of Kompong Som, and are alerting the anti-aircraft batteries there.

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III. Of the five Cambodian gunboats that were deployed as of last night (Washington time) around Koh Tang Island, three have been sunk by American aircraft.

- A. At latest report, only one gunboat remained a little over a mile south of the island.

Other Developments

- IV. [REDACTED] 25X1

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[] "to successfully solve this problem politically according to the guidelines of the organization."

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A. [] [] could relate to the Mayaguez incident, but it seems more likely that it is addressed to a low-level commander dealing with his Vietnamese opposite number in a local dispute over border territory.

V. Around midnight (Washington time), a US tanker enroute to Bangkok reported that a Swedish-registered refrigerator ship near Panjang Island, well south of Koh Tang, had been attacked and shot at by a Cambodian boat. At 5:00 A.M. a US reconnaissance aircraft observed the ship. It showed no sign of distress, and now appears on its normal course to Bangkok. A small boat, not believed to be a gunboat, was sighted 3 miles away, following the ship's same course and speed. According to press reports from Thailand, a Panamanian freighter was detained for about two hours in the same area today.

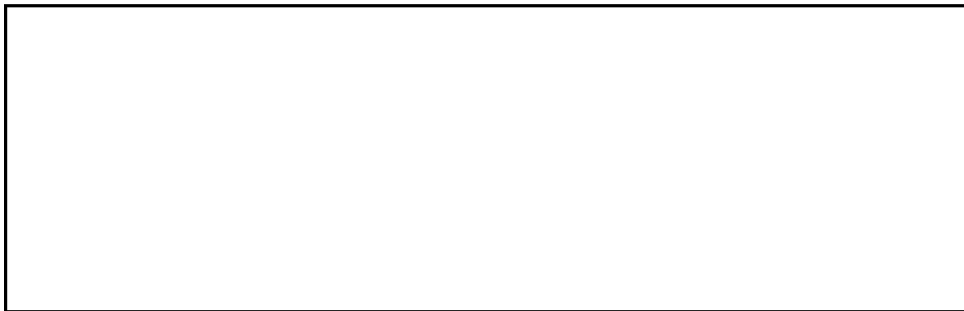
Thai Reactions

VI. The Thai have reacted sharply to the movement of US Marines to U-Tapao. Prime Minister Khukrit presented an aide memoire to the US Embassy to-

day stating that unless the Marines are withdrawn immediately, the "good relations and cooperation existing between Thailand and the US would be exposed to serious and damaging consequences."

A. Khukrit undoubtedly feels he will have to make some public gesture that will take him off the hook with the new Cambodian government, and his own population.

B.



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C. Should public pressure build on Khukrit, he has several options open to him:

- to "encourage" student demonstrations against the US,
- to order the closing of U-Tapao air base, and
- to speed up the timetable for the withdrawal of all US forces in Thailand.

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Specifications of KC Naval Craft

Utility Launching Craft (LCU) French

Speed - eight knots
Range - 1,800 n.m.
Length - 193'
Draft - 4'5" maximum
Armament - 2 - 20 mm. AA
Capacity - 800 troops

Landing Craft Mechanized (LCM6)

Speed - nine knots
Range - 130 n.m.
Length - 56'
Draft - 3', 4' aft-loaded
Capacity - 80 troops

Riverine Patrol Boat (PBR) Mark 11

Speed - 25 knots
Range - 150 n.m.
Length - 31'
Armament - three 50 cal. machin guns
one 40 mm. grenade launcher
one 60 mm. mortar in some boats

Inshore Patrol Craft (PCF) "Swift" Type

Speed - 25 knots
Range - 180 n.m.
Length - 51'
Armament - one 81 mm. mortar
three 50 cal. machine guns
two 40 mm. grenade launchers

Submarine Chaser (PC)

Speed - 15 knots
Range - 3,325 n.m.
Length - 174'
Armament - one 3.5" gun
one 40 mm. AA
four 20 mm. AA

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Khmer Communist Military Equipment and Troops

	Naval			Air	Ground	Artillery	
	<u>Riverine</u> <u>Patrol Boats</u>	<u>Coastal</u> <u>Patrol Boats</u>	<u>Submarine</u> <u>Chasers</u>	<u>T-28 Fighters</u>	<u>Combat Troops</u>	<u>105-mm</u>	<u>155-mm</u>
Total	60	17-19	1	Approx. 100	60,000-70,000	250	24
Southwest	--	--	--	--	16,000	--	--
Kompong Som	10	13	1	3	2,000	--	--
Ream	--	5	--	--	--	At least 8	--

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